

ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS
FY2008
JULY 2007—JUNE 2008



MARYLAND STATE LAW LIBRARY
MARYLAND'S FIRST LEGAL RESOURCE

2007 – 2008 Contents

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Highlights from the Year

- ◆ **Library website completely re-designed**
- ◆ **Maryland People's Law Library finds new home at the State Law Library**
- ◆ **Annual Report FY2007 won the AALL Publications Award, Print Division**
- ◆ **Number of visitors to the library rose by more than 20%**

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Fiscal Year 2008 witnessed significant additions to the Library's electronic collections and services. With the acquisition of subscriptions to several new databases, patrons now have access to thousands of journal titles and other legal materials. Mid-year saw the adoption of the award-winning People's Law Library (PLL) website into the State Law Library's fold. The presence of the PLL provides a unique opportunity for the Library to extend its assistance to the information-hungry public. The growing need to provide legal information resources to self-represented litigants makes this site a welcome addition to the Library's services.

After a detailed evaluation process, the Library's website received a facelift. With information sorted specifically to serve each category of patron, the site is now more user-friendly, content-rich and attractive to the eye.

The Library continues to expand, both its collections and its services. The Library is proud to provide a fundamental public service, this year to an increased number of visitors.

Steve Anderson

Director, Maryland State Law library

THE LIBRARY STAFF, 2007-2008

STEVE ANDERSON, DIRECTOR
SHIRLEY ARONSON, STATE PUBLICATIONS
SCOTT ASHLIN, LIBRARY CLERK
KATHERINE BAER, REFERENCE AND STATE PUBLICATIONS
BERNICE BERNSTEIN, ACQUISITIONS
MAUREEN DELLA BARBA, LIBRARY CLERK
DEBRA HAINES, LIBRARY AIDE
RUTH HENDERSON, ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST AND
WEBMASTER
MARTINE JEAN, PEOPLE'S LAW LIBRARY
RUDI LAMY, REFERENCE AND CATALOGING
MARY JO LAZUN, ELECTRONIC SERVICES
CATHERINE MCGUIRE, OUTREACH SERVICES
CAROLE ROCHE, REFERENCE
JESSIE TAM, TECHNICAL SERVICES
CINDY TERRY, FEDERAL DOCUMENTS AND SYSTEMS
DEE VAN NEST, REFERENCE COORDINATOR
ED WIESENBALER, FEDERAL DOCUMENTS ASSISTANT



THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE, 2007-2008

HON. ROBERT M. BELL, CHIEF JUDGE, COURT OF APPEALS
HON. CLAYTON GREENE, JR., COURT OF APPEALS
HON. PETER B. KRAUSER, COURT OF SPECIAL APPEALS
HON. DEBORAH SWEET EYLER, COURT OF SPECIAL APPEALS
FRANK BROCCOLINA, STATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR
BESSIE DECKER, CLERK, COURT OF APPEALS
PATRICIA ANN LOGAN, ESQ., ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY OFFICE OF LAW
STEVEN ANDERSON, ESQ., LIBRARY DIRECTOR

LIBRARY PROFILE

The Maryland State Law Library opened its doors in 1827 as the Maryland State Library. Originally housed in the Capitol Building, the Library's original mission centered on the collection of materials of general interest to the State of Maryland. Because its nearest neighbors were the judges and legislators, legal materials grew much faster in proportion to the general history collection and other miscellany. When the Court of Appeals moved to its own building, the Library moved with it, cementing a relationship with the courts that has continued to this day. The Library's name was officially changed to the Maryland State Law Library in the 1970's to reflect a purpose that was already well-established.

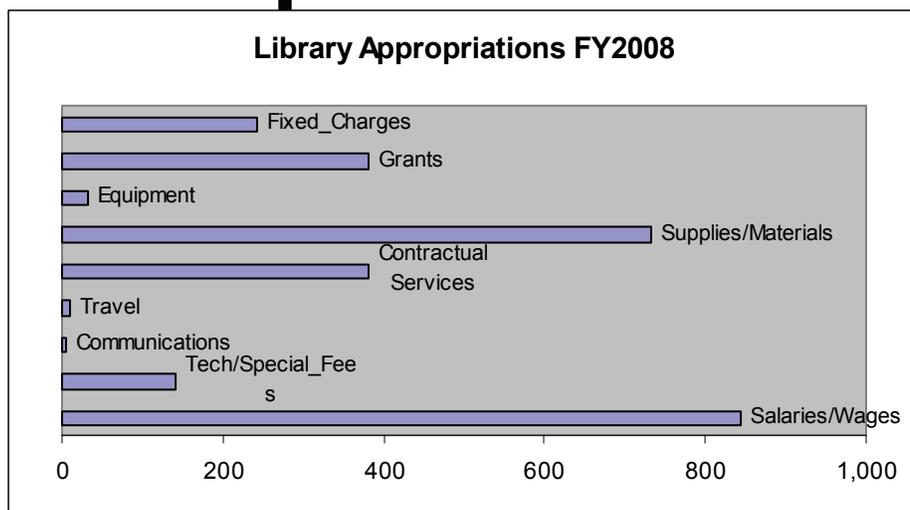
The Library's primary responsibility is support of the research activities of the Maryland State Judiciary. Additionally, a wide variety of information services are also extended to the Executive and Legislative branches of State Government; to bar members statewide; and to the public.

Currently, the Library has eighteen staff, of which twelve are full time. In addition, the Library supports volunteer relationships with members of the community and local educational institutions.

The Library's collection numbers some

235,000 volumes in print and audio-visual formats, 12 online database subscriptions, and 125,000 microform volume equivalents. The Library collects materials in the areas of general law, Maryland law, Maryland state publications and task force reports, Maryland history, Federal documents, general reference, and law and general periodicals and newspapers.

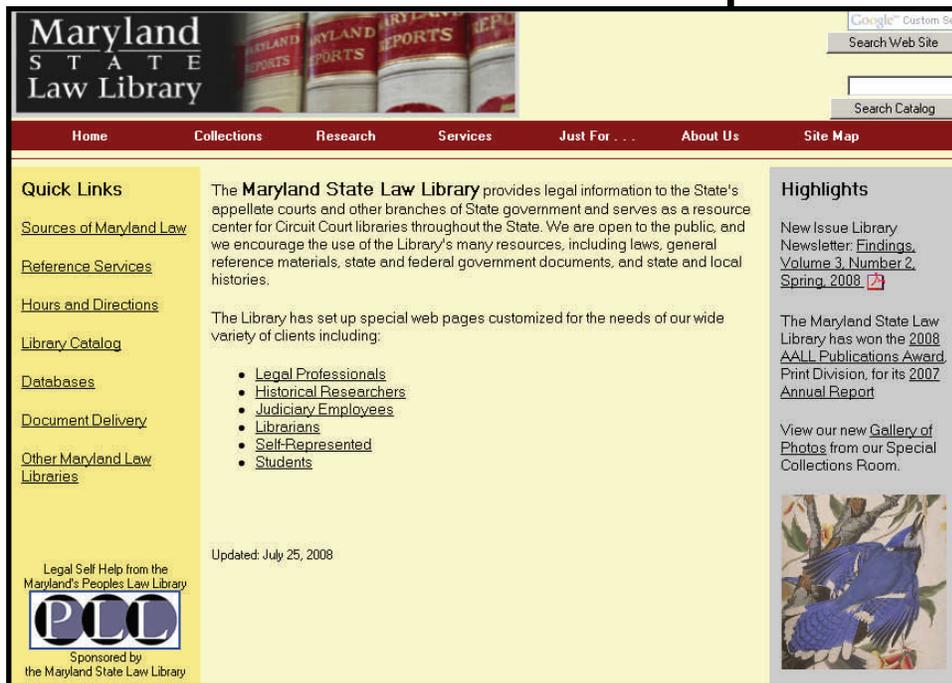
On an average day, the staff fields dozens of requests, both short and complex, from the Library's many patrons, including judges, law



Figures are in thousands

clerks, attorneys, self-represented litigants, students, and other members of the public. The staff maintains dynamic working relationships with colleagues in public libraries, law school libraries, community colleges and law firms. Both alone and in cooperation with these other institutions, the State Law Library aims to provide comprehensive assistance to all patrons.

WEB SITE RE-DESIGN



The State Law Library's site has undergone several transformations from its original form. The first major overhaul, in March 2006, redesigned the site in column format and included convenient "quick links".

In 2007-2008, the site was again revised, this time with more significant format and content changes. Months in the works, the final version debuted in early July 2008.

The old site, with its white background, was stark. Content crossed over between several categories, and search aids were few, making the site somewhat challenging to navigate.

A Highlights column to the right makes prominent any new or unique activities, information or dates in which Library users might be especially interested.

The new site organizes content under clear headings across the top of the page. Special pages are designed for each of the Library's user groups, including the Judiciary, attorneys, other librarians, and the general public. These special pages cross-locate materials from the various content areas, making finding materials related to a user's goals faster and easier.



DATABASE ADDITIONS

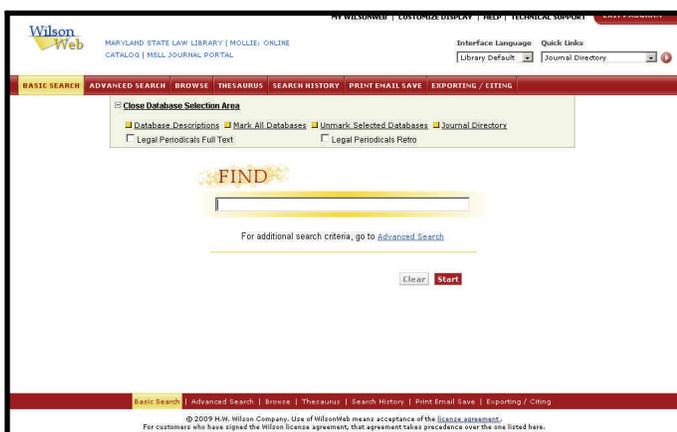
LLMC Digital, an ambitious project to scan and make searchable early court reporters from all 50 states and the federal courts, was added this year. The outcome of the project is an image of the actual print version of the reports. In most states, including Maryland, the print version of the reporter is the official version but access to these volumes can be problematic because of their fragile condition. *LLMC Digital* gives staff access to the “print” version from outside of the Library and assists in preserving the print version by decreasing the need to use the actual book.



Via *Newspaper Archive*, Library patrons now have full text access to the historical versions of the *Annapolis Capital* and other local newspapers. For legal researchers, the *Capital* provides an important tool for reviewing issues surrounding legislative intent. For genealogists, this resource is invaluable for finding information on family members.



For a century, *Wilson's Index to Legal Periodicals* has been the pre-eminent tool for finding articles in law reviews. The ILP contains comprehensive coverage of U.S. legal periodicals from 1908 to the present. The Library now offers the Maryland Judiciary and visitors access to this important resource online and, in many cases, full-text access to the articles.



PEOPLE'S LAW LIBRARY

In November 2007, the award-winning Maryland People's Law Library website (www.peoples-law.info) found a new home at the Maryland State Law Library.

The People's Law Library, initially launched in 1996, has been supported during its development by Maryland's

"Through this partnership, information on state and federal law affecting all Marylanders and their families will now be housed online with the wealth of information found with the State Law Library and its Web site, thus improving access to justice for all citizens."

***Hon. Robert Bell
Chief Judge, Maryland Court of Appeals***

non-profit legal services providers. It most recently was a project of the Maryland Legal Assistance Network (MLAN), with generous support from the Open Society Institute, the Maryland Legal Services Corporation, the

Maryland Legal Aid Bureau and the Maryland Administrative Office of the Courts.

In November 2007, the State Law Library assumed the management of the site. The Library, a natural partner in the provision of legal information, understands the value of the site as an aid to self-represented litigants and others in need of relevant law-related resources. The Maryland Legal Aid Bureau and other legal services providers will continue to be partners with the Maryland Judiciary in the provision of content for the site.

Contact Us | Who We Are | mlsba.org | [Legal Service Providers Database](#) | Last Date Edited 03/25/09

The Award Winning Maryland's Peoples Law Library

Law-related, self-help information for Marylanders.

- Mortgage Foreclosure Assistance Resources**
- Benefits**: Social Security, SSI, Welfare Benefits, Prescription Drugs, more...
- Criminal**: Victims' Rights, Defendants' Rights, Witnesses, more...
- Education**: Discipline, Enrolling, Special Education, more...
- Family Law**: Divorce, Custody, Visitation, Support, Self-help, more...
- Mediation**: Arbitration, Dispute Resolution, Settlement Conferences, more...
- 60+ Senior Citizens**: Benefits, Long Term Care, Caregivers' Information, Health Decisions ...
- District Court: Help for Eastern Shore residents.**
- Consumer**: Bankruptcy, Debt, Identity Theft, Credit, more...
- Domestic Violence**: Abuse, Legal Options, Shelters, Support, Children, Pets, more...
- Employment**: Find a job, unemployment, pensions, wage & hour issues, etc.
- Housing**: Foreclosures, Landlord Tenant, Subsidized Housing, Home Ownership, Security Deposits, more...
- More Areas of Law**: Traffic, Small Claims, Personal Injury, Immigration, Civil Rights, Emancipation, Name Change...
- Youth Law**: Created for Marylanders under age 18 by the MSBA Leadership Academy.

[Maryland Judiciary: Main Website](#) | [Maryland District Court Website](#) | [Maryland State Law Library Website](#)

Search THE WEBSITE

How Do I Find...

- Legal Help?
- A Mediator?
- District Courts?
- Circuit Courts?
- Court Records?
- The Law?
- Law Libraries?
- Legal Terms?
- Self Help Programs?
- Domestic Violence Shelters?
- Vital Records?
- People?
- Homelessness Resources?
- Supervised Visitation Centers?

Over the course of the first six months of the Library's management of the site, the People's Law Library Web Content Coordinator has reviewed and updated several hundred web pages, including:

- Benefits
- Civil Rights
- Consumer Law
- Disability Law
- Education
- Elder Law
- Family Law
- Housing Issues, including new information on foreclosures and ground rent
- Substance Abuse Information
- Taxation



In June 2008, a Content Advisory Committee, comprised of legal services providers and Judiciary representatives, held its first meeting to discuss guidelines and enhancements for the site. Organizations providing content will be called upon to contribute information that will assist in

“The Web site helps to explain the law in ‘user-friendly’, easy-to-understand terms, and we are very happy to help continue such an important service.”

***Steve Anderson
Maryland State Law Library Director***

meeting the legal needs of their user populations.

Following the content update and the establishment of the Content Advisory Committee, the Library will give consideration to other possible enhancements within existing technology and budgetary structures. These developments may include: the redesign of navigational elements to improve the public's access

to legal information; the consolidation and focus of the site's content to better address the needs of self-represented litigants; and the integration of other government and community websites and databases with the variety of content available on the People's Law Library.

“We are delighted with this new partnership, which will enhance management of the Web site and benefit the public it serves for years to come.”

***Wilhelm Joseph
Executive Director, Maryland Legal Aid***

DIGITIZATION

The Library is committed to improving public access to its comprehensive collections of legal and government information. Consequently, the Library has embarked on a program to digitize those printed Maryland materials that are both fairly unique to the Library and frequently used by legal researchers. In order to provide Library users with a state-of-the-art online document repository, the Library plans to launch its Digital Collections database using the PTFIS Archivalware platform.

Two collections comprise the initial phase of the digitization program. Scanning began on the first collection, Maryland Rules Committee Meeting Minutes and Agendas, in the summer of 2008. These Minutes and Agendas are an essential source of background information on the development of the state's court rules. Researchers will soon be able to search

the full-text of more than 60 years of meeting materials to find mention of the adoption of specific rules.

The second part of the initial phase includes the addition of previously-scanned copies of the Proceedings of the Maryland Judicial Conference. These reports, dating from 1947 to 1997, provide historical information on the work of the Judiciary.

The Library's future plans include the scanning of selected Maryland Task Force Reports. These reports are often helpful sources of information used to determine legislative intent. The Library will be examining this collection to identify which reports should be scanned first in order to make available the most relevant and useful material.

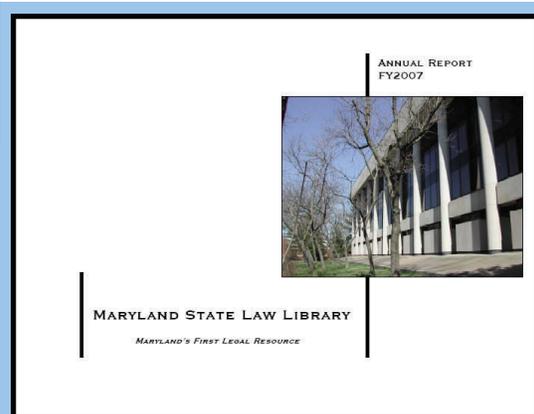
LIBRARY AWARDS

Bernice Bernstein, acquisitions librarian at the State Law Library, was recognized for her more than 40 years of exemplary public service with the *Daily Record's* 2008 "Unsung Legal Heroes Award".



Bernice has been with the Maryland State Law Library since 1966. During her years of service, she has worn many hats and worked under three directors. The Library is proud of her service, and offers to Bernice the warmest congratulations on her recognition.

The State Law Library won the 2008 American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) Law Library Publications Award, Print Division, for its Annual Report FY2007.



GRANTS TO CIRCUIT COURTS

The State Law Library's Maryland Circuit Court Library Grants Program has provided critical funding resources to Circuit Court libraries throughout the State since its inception in 2002. Budgeted in FY08 at \$380,000, the Library awarded, based on applications received, a total of \$313,260 in grants to 16 libraries.

"We continue to receive favorable comments about the availability of Westlaw in our library, and we note that we would be unable to provide this service were it not for the State Law Library Grant."

St. Mary's County Law Library

Almost half of grant funds awarded in FY2008 went toward the maintenance of Computer-Assisted Legal Research (CALR) contracts with Westlaw or Lexis. These contracts alone can absorb a significant portion of a small county's law library revenue. The grants provide a much-needed supplement to establish core CALR services across the state. During FY2008, 20 of the 21 public Circuit Court law libraries offered some type of CALR access, to Westlaw or Lexis or both services.

"Having these CALR subscriptions has improved the level of service our library provides to our users by greatly enlarging our collection and making available many resources that we do not receive in print."

Charles County Public Law Library

Additional grant funding assisted in other major library purchases such as print

materials; shelving and other library furniture, and library employee salaries.

"The library was losing a large amount of space due to the building of an office. The shelving and carrels [purchased with grant funds] have re-organized the collection to allow the library to remain functioning to its full capacity."

Queen Anne's County Law Library

Midway through the fiscal year, the Judiciary created a uniform grant policy, applicable to all Judiciary grant programs.

FY2008 Grant Expenditures Percentages By Category

<i>Westlaw/Lexis</i>	<i>47%</i>
<i>Library Subscriptions</i>	<i>21%</i>
<i>Salaries & Wages</i>	<i>15%</i>
<i>Equipment</i>	<i>13%</i>
<i>Microfilming/Scanning</i>	<i>2%</i>
<i>Travel</i>	<i><1%</i>
<i>Database Resources</i>	<i><1%</i>

In keeping with the new policy, the Library's Outreach Program revised the Library's own policies and forms in preparation for the upcoming FY09 fiscal year.

The Outreach Program's general assistance to Circuit Court libraries continued throughout the year with field visits, assistance in collection development, and the hosting of the Annual Maryland Circuit Court Law Libraries meeting.

REFERENCE & EDUCATION SERVICES

The Library regularly offers training sessions on varying topics related to legal research. Many of these sessions are available to Judiciary staff internally, including law clerk orientations each Fall; New Commissioner Academy sessions; a family law training for Circuit Court Clerks; and a regularly-scheduled

“I truly learned and enjoyed the entire class. The instructors are informative and upbeat.”

Student, Legal Research I: Basic Print Resources for Judiciary Employees

“Legal Research I: Print Resources” course taught by the Library staff, offered through the Judiciary Human Resources Office of Professional Development.

In FY08, the Library also hosted some non-Judiciary groups, with informational tours for both students and public librarians.

In November 2007, staff represented the Library at the Annual Maryland State Bar Association’s Solo and Small Firm Conference as exhibitors. The Library was very pleased to meet, face to face, many current patrons as well as to introduce the Library’s services to new patrons.

At the MSBA’s Solo/Small Firm Annual Conference, several visitors to the Library’s booth commented that it was helpful to see the State Law Library present at the conference.

The Library continues to offer traditional reference and research services. Reference statistics reflect a continuing rise in the use of these services. Phone, in-person and email reference questions rose by more than 10%

Estimated foot traffic (visitors to the Library) rose by more than 20%.

from FY2007. Overall reference questions rose by almost 15%. The number of “hits” on the Library’s website also rose, from 135,420 in FY2007 to over 165,800 in FY2008. Estimated foot traffic (visitors to the Library) rose by more than 20%.

COURT LIBRARIES CONFERENCE

By Administrative Order from Chief Judge Robert M. Bell of the Maryland Court of Appeals, the State Law Library together with several other Maryland Circuit Court libraries formed the Conference of Maryland Court Law Library Directors in April 2008. The new Conference will advise the Judiciary on law library and legal information matters, as well as address court library management and leadership. Conference libraries will discuss coordination and collaboration in an effort to improve collections and services.



**ROBERT C. MURPHY COURTS OF APPEAL
BUILDING
361 ROWE BOULEVARD
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401**

**410-260-1430
888-216-8156
LAWLIBRARY@MDCOURTS.GOV
WWW.MDCOURTS.GOV/LAWLIB**